

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA



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IN ATTENDANCE: COMMISSIONER DARCIE HOUCK

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE CAMILLE WATTS-ZAGHA,
presiding

Order Instituting Rulemaking to)	PREHEARING
Establish a Framework and Processes)	CONFERENCE
for Assessing the Affordability of)	
Utility Service.)	
)	Rulemaking
)	18-07-006

REPORTERS' TRANSCRIPT
Virtual Proceeding
October 22, 2021
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Reported by: Doris Huaman, CSR No. 10538
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VIRTUAL PROCEEDING

OCTOBER 22, 2021 - 2:41 P.M.

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ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE WATTS-ZAGHA:

We will be on the record.

The Commission will come to order.

Good afternoon, everyone. This is the time and place for the prehearing conference in the affordability framework Rulemaking 18-07-006.

I am Administrative Law Judge Camille Watts-Zagha, and I will oversee and manage future phases of this proceeding in consultation with assigned Commissioner Darcie Houck. We are fortunate to have Commissioner Houck with us this afternoon, and I will turn to her now for some opening remarks.

Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER HOUCK: Thank you, Judge Watts-Zagha.

Good afternoon, everyone. Again, I am Darcie Houck, the assigned Commissioner for this proceeding, and I am pleased to be here today to hear party input on the revised scope and schedule of the affordability proceeding. As you know, last month we revised the scope of the proceeding to

1 establish a new phase to explore strategies
2 to mitigate future energy rate increases with
3 a focus on strategies proposed at the rates
4 and cost en banc held earlier this year in
5 February.

6 This new phase will kick off with a
7 preliminary workshop in February of next
8 year, 2022 and will begin in earnest after
9 the current Phase 2 is concluded next spring
10 at which point we will ask parties to submit
11 their proposals for strategies to mitigate
12 energy rate increases. And we expect the
13 main deliverable of this Phase 3 to be set
14 out through recommendations for actions of
15 the Commission or other entities such as the
16 state legislature that could be taken to
17 mitigate future energy rate increases.

18 In the meantime, we are proceeding
19 full steam ahead with Phase 2, which
20 addresses implementation of the affordability
21 metrics adopted last year, and we expect to
22 issue a Phase 2 staff report in the next few
23 weeks followed by a workshop, round of
24 comments and a proposed decision on the
25 Phase 2 issues in the spring.

26 I've reviewed the party comments on
27 the revised scope and schedule of the
28 proceeding, and I look forward to hearing the

1 discussion today. I am particularly
2 interested in hearing any additional thoughts
3 from the parties on whether -- strategies to
4 mitigate natural gas rate increases should be
5 included within Phase 3 -- the Phase 3 scope
6 of this proceeding given the different
7 perspectives presented in the comments prior
8 to the PHC.

9 So with that, I will close by
10 thanking Judge Watts-Zagha and our court
11 reporters: Andrea Ross, Doris Huaman and
12 Rebecca DeRosa for their work to organize and
13 run this prehearing conference. We could not
14 do our job without all of them. So I will
15 turn this back over to you, Judge
16 Watts-Zagha.

17 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you,
18 Commissioner. So the purpose of today's
19 prehearing conference is to, as the
20 Commissioner mentioned, hear from parties
21 again on the issues of scope and schedule.
22 We will have a period of time to discuss
23 briefly the Phase 2 scope and schedule, and
24 then we will turn next to Phase 3. And of
25 course, we will briefly cover the
26 categorization and need for hearings as well.

27 I remind everyone that while we are
28 listening carefully to your input today and

1 have reviewed the comments filed on October
2 15th regarding Phase 3, it will be finalized
3 once the Commissioner's final scoping memo
4 and ruling is published. On that note, I do
5 hope you have with you to refer to the fourth
6 amended scoping memo and ruling dated
7 September 15th as well as the October 11th
8 email ruling amending the Phase 2 schedule.
9 And if for any reason you don't have those,
10 you can always refer to the docket card on
11 the Commission's website.

12 We are moving towards taking
13 appearances and confirming parties active
14 here today. For those newer to Commission
15 practices, party status to a proceeding is
16 granted for those who intend to participate
17 actively and formally in a proceeding. One
18 representative is designated on the official
19 service list for that party but as many
20 people associated with that organization or
21 entity may join the service list on the
22 information-only status, and you can do that
23 by e-mailing the Commission's process office
24 and requesting to be added to the service
25 list as an information-only person.

26 So I'll begin today with parties who
27 did RSVP for the prehearing conference and
28 those that also filed comments on October

1 15th and just confirm that you are speaking
2 as a representative today. And if you plan
3 to order a transcript of today's hearing,
4 please do include that when you state your
5 name and organizational affiliation.

6 And following that, we will turn to
7 motions for party status. And I will add one
8 thing so you can plan accordingly during this
9 conference, that we will continue for about
10 two hours. And if we do hit that two-hour
11 mark, around 4:30, we will take a 10-minute
12 break just for your planning purposes.

13 All right. We will start with the
14 National Diversity Coalition. Please state
15 your name, and restate your organizational
16 affiliation clearly for the record and then,
17 of course, any intentions regarding
18 transcripts.

19 SPEAKER GONDAI: Good afternoon.
20 Tadashi Gondai affiliated -- representing the
21 National Diversity Coalition. Regarding the
22 transcripts, we generally don't order those.
23 It was our understanding that if one party,
24 such as the utility, orders it, then other
25 parties are able to get copies of it. If
26 that has changed, please let me know, but
27 that was our understanding.

28 Thank you.

1 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Mr. Tadashi, is that
2 correct?

3 SPEAKER GONDAI: Last name is Gondai.

4 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. I can't really
5 hear you that well. I'm sorry.

6 SPEAKER GONDAI: I'm sorry. Is that --

7 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Your sound is fine.
8 I just need you to repeat your name, please.

9 SPEAKER GONDAI: Oh, sure. My name is
10 Tadashi Gondai. Last name is Gondai, yes.

11 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you, Tadashi
12 Gondai. Okay. So the transcript -- as long
13 as one party requests an expedited
14 transcript, then others will have access to
15 it. So --

16 SPEAKER GONDAI: Thank you.

17 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: We're just looking
18 for -- kind of a heads-up to the court
19 reporters if they should be planning to
20 prepare it on an expedited basis.

21 SPEAKER GONDAI: Great.

22 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. Next we have
23 Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

24 SPEAKER ROACH: (Speaker muted.)

25 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: I remember there may
26 have been some issue with the -- well, I
27 see -- I'm not hearing anything. So I'm
28 going to let Pacific Gas and Electric's

1 representative just take a moment, and I'm
2 going to return to you in one moment.

3 Okay. Public Advocates Office.

4 SPEAKER OBIORA: Good afternoon, your
5 Honor. This is Noel Obiora on behalf of the
6 California Public Advocates Office. I
7 believe that's just what you want me to say.

8 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. That's fine,
9 Noel Obiora. Thank you.

10 Let's turn back to Pacific Gas and
11 Electric.

12 SPEAKER ROACH: (Speaker muted.)

13 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. I have another
14 head shaking. So Mr. -- I will just speak to
15 you, and we have IT telling us, "We've been
16 trying to raise PG&E by every possible
17 method." So I am going to come back to you
18 at the end of the list, and if you could just
19 communicate with your colleagues and also be
20 in touch via email with the IT folks or our
21 contact.

22 COMMISSIONER HOUCK: Judge, it looks
23 like Mr. Roach is muted. Maybe if you give
24 him a second to see if he can unmute, because
25 it looks like -- red -- mic is red.

26 SPEAKER ROACH: Darren Roach.

27 COMMISSIONER HOUCK: There we go.

28 SPEAKER ROACH: I'm on the phone and

1 on -- hopefully the muted has -- echo has
2 stopped.

3 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay, Darren Roach.
4 But we have taken your appearance at this
5 time. So this is quite good. I think we'll
6 move along.

7 And thank you so much, Commissioner.

8 Southern California Edison Company.

9 SPEAKER BRIGGS: Thank you, your Honor.
10 William Briggs on behalf of Southern
11 California Edison Company.

12 I don't think we need an expedited
13 transcript at this stage. Thank you.

14 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Perfect. And we had
15 Southern California Gas Company.

16 SPEAKER GRESSLER: Good afternoon, your
17 Honor. Eric Gressler for Southern California
18 Gas Company. We don't plan on ordering an
19 expedited transcript either.

20 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Quite helpful.

21 SPEAKER GRESSLER: Thank you.

22 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Southwest Gas
23 Corporation.

24 (No response.)

25 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: That's fine. They
26 filed comments jointly. So it may be that
27 there's -- if another gas company is planning
28 to speak on behalf of all the gas companies

1 similar to how you filed comments on the
2 15th, just do let us know that when I call on
3 your company.

4 The Utility Reform Network.

5 SPEAKER CHEN: Hello. This is David
6 Cheng representing TURN. Thank you.

7 And we do not plan on ordering an
8 expedited transcript.

9 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. Do we
10 have a representative for San Diego Gas &
11 Electric with us?

12 SPEAKER COHEN: (Speaker muted.)

13 COMMISSIONER HOUCK: You're on mute,
14 Ms. Cohen.

15 SPEAKER COHEN: (Speaker muted.)

16 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. There you go.

17 SPEAKER COHEN: Can you hear me now?

18 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: (Nodding head.)

19 SPEAKER COHEN: Great. Sharon Cohen on
20 behalf of San Diego Gas & Electric Company.

21 And we do not plan on ordering an
22 expedited transcript at this time.

23 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: And Sharon Cohen, are
24 you speaking today just for San Diego Gas &
25 Electric? No other gas company?

26 SPEAKER COHEN: Yes. No other gas
27 company.

28 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. Thank you.

1 All right. I believe those are all the
2 parties for whom we have prior notice today,
3 and now I will --

4 SPEAKER KASNITZ: Excuse me, your
5 Honor. This is Melissa Kasnitz for the
6 Center for Accessible Technology.

7 I did communicate with staff that I
8 was going to be a participant.

9 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Excellent. Thank you
10 for jumping in, Melissa Kasnitz, and we will
11 consider that your appearance. And that may
12 have been a miscommunication to me. So thank
13 you.

14 SPEAKER VESPA: Your Honor, this is
15 Matt Vespa for Sierra Club.

16 I also communicated in advance.

17 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay, Matthew Vespa.
18 And so I noticed we also have a motion for
19 party status from your organization. And I'm
20 just about to turn to those --

21 SPEAKER VESPA: Ah, I see.

22 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: -- who have not yet
23 been granted party status, and we can do
24 those appearances then. So I guess I'll
25 pause right now just to be sure that any
26 existing parties have -- are -- have they
27 joined us and would they like to make an
28 appearance.

1 SPEAKER HON: Yes, your Honor. This is
2 Willis Hon for California Water Association.

3 We've been a party since the
4 beginning of this proceeding, and we do not
5 plan on ordering an expedited transcript. I
6 look forward to participating in this
7 proceeding.

8 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: That's helpful. Are
9 there any other parties to the preceding here
10 participating today?

11 SPEAKER CHHABRA: Good afternoon, your
12 Honor. This is Mehit Chhabra from NRDC,
13 National Resources Defense Counsel.

14 We are a party, and I thought I
15 requested to be a speaker, but either way,
16 this is my appearance.

17 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thanks so much.
18 Okay. Please go ahead if you have also -- if
19 you are also joining us as a party.

20 SPEAKER ROACH: Your Honor, this is
21 Darren Roach for PG&E. I'm hoping that you
22 can hear me now.

23 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: I can hear you quite
24 well and it seems to be --

25 SPEAKER ROACH: I apologize, but Darren
26 Roach for Pacific Gas and Electric, and we
27 would like to have a transcript.

28 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: An expedited

1 transcript, Darren Roach?

2 SPEAKER ROACH: Yes.

3 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Excellent. All
4 right. I'm pausing to see if there are any
5 other participants in the room who are
6 already parties.

7 (No response.)

8 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: I would like to turn
9 now to written motions for party status. I
10 have four written motions for party status.
11 And I will call on your organization, and
12 then you can please state your name for the
13 record. We'll start with Sierra Club again.

14 SPEAKER VESPA: Okay. Thank you, your
15 Honor. Matt Vespa for Sierra Club.

16 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. Do we
17 have the Small Business Utility Advocates
18 with us today?

19 SPEAKER WINMILL: Hi, your Honor. Yes.
20 Jeff Winmill for SBUA.

21 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Great.

22 California Environment Justice
23 Alliance.

24 SPEAKER LAZEROW: Yes. Good afternoon,
25 your Honor. Shana Lazerow on behalf of the
26 California Environmental Justice Alliance.

27 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you.

28 And Peninsula Clean Energy

1 Authority.

2 (No response.)

3 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. I will
4 assume they are not with us today and hope
5 that they are not trying to become panelists.
6 So I'm going to pause for just one moment and
7 have -- oh. They are with us. I see Doug
8 Karpa in the chat. Quite helpful. I will
9 pause for another moment and ask our IT folks
10 to see -- okay. It looks like you are
11 promoted to panelists, but you are unable to
12 unmute is what you are saying.

13 SPEAKER KARPA: Oh. Well, now it seems
14 to work. Yeah. Doug Karpa for Peninsula
15 Clean Energy Authority.

16 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Doug Karpa, are you
17 also able to turn on your video when you
18 speak?

19 SPEAKER KARPA: Theoretically. Come
20 on, phone. You can do this. On the road,
21 I'm afraid. So it doesn't seem to be
22 allowing me to unmute the video.

23 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. I was
24 just checking since that is my preference --

25 SPEAKER KARPA: Yes. Yes. Mine too.
26 (Inaudible).

27 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. We will move
28 on. Commission Rules of Practice and

1 Procedure Rule 1.4(b)(1) and (2) require that
2 persons seeking party status shall fully
3 disclose the person or entity on behalf -- on
4 whose behalf the motion is made, the interest
5 of such persons in the proceeding and the
6 pertinent factual and legal contentions the
7 person intends to make. The motions of -- I
8 have reviewed the motions of the California
9 Environment Justice Alliance on October 15th,
10 the Peninsula Clean Energy Authority motion
11 dated October 15th, the Sierra Club motion of
12 October 14th, and the Small Business Utility
13 Advocates' motion of October 13th. These
14 motions have all been docketed and are
15 compliant with Rule 1.4(b)(1) and (2). And
16 the entities I just named are granted party
17 status.

18 (California Environmental Justice
19 Alliance was granted Party Status.)

20 (Peninsula Clean Energy Authority
21 was granted Party Status.)

22 (Sierra Club was granted Party
23 Status.)

24 (Small Business Utility Advocates
25 was granted Party Status.)

26 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: For the next subject,
27 we will entertain oral motions for party
28 status. I will pause. And if you intend to

1 make an oral motion for party status, you may
2 speak up. And if you are unable to speak up,
3 I will also look at the electronic hands
4 raised. So we will pause for a moment.

5 SPEAKER ABRAMS: Your Honor, Will
6 Abrams looking for party status on behalf of
7 myself.

8 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Will Abrams, are you
9 able to discuss your interest in the
10 proceeding and your intention to what
11 contribution you will make?

12 SPEAKER ABRAMS: Yes, I appreciate
13 that, your Honor. So I am a ratepayer, a
14 wildfire survivor and really looking to
15 advocate around the affordability issues that
16 are central to this proceeding. And I have a
17 unique perspective that I think is valuable
18 for the proceeding given my status as both a
19 victim of utility fires and as an individual
20 ratepayer who is close to many of these
21 issues.]

22 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you, Will
23 Abrams.

24 SPEAKER KENNEDY: Good afternoon. My
25 name is John Kennedy. I'm with the Rural
26 County Representatives of California. We
27 would like to --

28 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Excuse me, John

1 Kennedy. Can you turn your video on, please?

2 SPEAKER KENNEDY: I can try. I'm
3 afraid of losing bandwidth because of my
4 kids. So let me try and adjust. Does that
5 work? Here we go.

6 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Please proceed, and
7 thank you.

8 (Crosstalk.)

9 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: It really helps
10 myself and the court reporters if we can also
11 see the person speaking.

12 SPEAKER KENNEDY: Ah, that makes sense.
13 Well, thank you. Apologies if I lose
14 connection with bandwidth, but do appreciate
15 the opportunity.

16 We are a participant and party in
17 many other proceedings. We represent 37
18 rural counties throughout the state. Many
19 are in high fire-risk areas; others are not.
20 But, they're ratepayers, nonetheless, and
21 affordability is a key issue, and extremely
22 important for many of those jurisdictions,
23 especially as many of our residents are
24 low-income and very low-income Californians.
25 So we look forward to participating in this
26 proceeding and providing some ideas on how to
27 reduce costs and impacts to ratepayers and
28 ways that we can leverage other programs to

1 perhaps avoid costs that would otherwise be
2 borne by ratepayers.

3 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: John Kennedy, I
4 missed if you are associated with an
5 organization or company.

6 SPEAKER KENNEDY: Yes, the Rural County
7 Representatives of California.

8 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you. Do we
9 have -- and you may turn off your videos.
10 Thank you.

11 Do we have any other oral motions
12 for party status?

13 (No response.)

14 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Hearing none, I will
15 grant the motions of John Kennedy
16 representing Rural County Representatives of
17 California and the motion of Will Abrams
18 representing an individual, as compliant with
19 Rule 1.4(b)(1) and (2). You are granted
20 party status.

21 (Rural County Representatives of
22 California was granted Party
23 Status.)

24 (Will Abrams was granted Party
25 Status.)

26 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: I'll turn now to the
27 categorization and the need for hearing.

28 The September 15th motion stated we

1 would continue the categorization as
2 quasi-legislative, and we did not receive any
3 objections to this categorization, nor any
4 objections to the determination that hearings
5 will not be necessary. And, of course, if
6 this changes during the proceeding, the
7 Commission does reserve the possibility of
8 holding hearings.

9 I will again pause for a moment
10 here, and allow those who did not file
11 comments on October 15th to raise any
12 objections to the categorization or the need
13 for hearing. And so this is a time when I
14 would like those of you who did not file
15 comments, and wish to address this issue, to
16 use your electronic hand, and then I will
17 call on you before you speak. And I'm going
18 to ask for the assistance of IT and/or,
19 Commissioner, if you see any electronic hands
20 raised before I do to go ahead and call those
21 names out, since I'm doing my best to look.
22 But, I do not see anything.

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have Jane
24 Krikorian has a hand up.

25 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. Thank you.
26 Jane Krikorian has a hand up, and if you
27 could share with me -- yes. Okay. If you
28 could state your name and affiliation, and

1 then --

2 SPEAKER KRIKORIAN: Yes, your Honor.
3 Thank you. I am Jane Krikorian from Utility
4 Consumers' Action Network. I am here filling
5 in for our attorney -- regular attorney,
6 Jason Zeller, who has been involved in this
7 proceeding from the beginning.

8 We did not file comments on
9 October 15th, because he had left on
10 vacation, and the ruling that came out
11 indicated that you only wanted
12 non-substantive comments. So he left us --

13 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Jane Krikorian, let
14 me interrupt you, and confirm --

15 SPEAKER KRIKORIAN: Of course.

16 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: -- that you are a
17 party to this proceeding. Is that right?

18 SPEAKER KRIKORIAN: Yes.

19 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. Please
20 proceed. Thank you.

21 SPEAKER KRIKORIAN: Yes. So we agree
22 with the categorization. And that's --
23 that's it, for now. Thank you.

24 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. And let the
25 record show that the Utilities Consumer
26 Action Network (sic) represented by Jane
27 Krikorian has made an appearance in this
28 prehearing conference, as well.

1 SPEAKER KRIKORIAN: Thank you.

2 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. Thank
3 you.

4 And feel free to just turn on your
5 videos when you are speaking.

6 Do we have any other parties who
7 would like to address the categorization and
8 the need for hearing at this time?

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have --

10 COMMISSIONER HOUCK: There were two
11 hands up.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Vincent Vitatoe
13 has his hand up.

14 And Jane Krikorian, if you could
15 lower your hand. Thank you.

16 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: I -- I missed the
17 party that had their hand up, but if they
18 could perhaps just introduce themselves again
19 slowly, and then make their comment.

20 SPEAKER VITATOE: Yes. This is Vincent
21 Vitatoe, and I just wanted to quickly make an
22 appearance.

23 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Excuse me.

24 SPEAKER VITATOE: I had a little --

25 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Excuse me. I cannot
26 see you, and I cannot hear you that well,
27 either. So if the -- if it's possible,
28 please let us know if you can turn on your

1 video; and if not, then we will -- ah-hah.

2 And if you could begin again, please, slowly.

3 (Unintelligible audio.)

4 SPEAKER VITATOE: Sure. My name's

5 Vincent --

6 (Unintelligible audio.)

7 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Vincent Vitatoe, I'm
8 sorry. I again cannot hear your video. So
9 now that we have seen you, thank you for
10 that. Why don't you try now turning off your
11 video, and then we will just listen to your
12 audio. But, go slowly, because I don't know
13 if I'm the only one who cannot hear.

14 But, I -- perhaps the court
15 reporters can give me a sign, are they having
16 trouble hearing?

17 THE REPORTER: Your Honor --

18 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right.

19 THE REPORTER: Your Honor, I'm sorry.
20 This --

21 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Oh, go ahead.

22 THE REPORTER: This is the reporter.
23 Mr. Vitatoe is cutting in and out.

24 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. So please try
25 one more time, and if we cannot hear you, we
26 will ask you to come back at a later time.
27 Go ahead slowly, and turn off your video to
28 see if that helps.

1 SPEAKER VITATOE: Sure. This is --
2 (Unintelligible audio.)

3 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. Vincent
4 Vitatoe, we cannot hear you. And I've
5 received word from our IT folks that your
6 bandwidth is indicating low bandwidth.

7 (Unintelligible audio.)

8 SPEAKER VITATOE: Can you hear me?

9 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: No, we cannot, and we
10 will ask you to go address the issue, and to
11 join back with us in a moment or two. And I
12 suggest that you may email independently with
13 some of our IT support folks to confirm
14 before you join us again.

15 SPEAKER VITATOE: Okay.

16 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. Thank
17 you.

18 I will pause again to see if we have
19 other participants.

20 (No response.)

21 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you. I'm going
22 to turn now to Phase 2. So please be
23 prepared to address the schedule and the
24 scope when I call on parties. And I'm going
25 to briefly read out the revised schedule that
26 we mailed out on October 11th via email
27 ruling.

28 The date for the staff proposal on

1 implementation issues is scheduled for -- to
2 be released to the service list on
3 November 8th. We have a workshop on the
4 staff proposal scheduled on November 15th,
5 and followed by a round of opening and reply
6 comments on December 8th and December 23rd;
7 and then, following that, in the beginning of
8 the second quarter, April 2022, we intend to
9 issue a proposed decision. And we did
10 consider party comments on this schedule, and
11 mostly, I will highlight an interest in
12 having adequate time to review the staff
13 proposal and make meaningful contributions,
14 both at the workshop and in the comment
15 cycle. So I do appreciate that.

16 And if you have something to address
17 beyond what you put in your filed comments,
18 since we are considering those, this would be
19 the time to do so. And I'm going to quickly
20 read off our list of participants here, and
21 ask -- and if you do not have anything to add
22 beyond what was filed, I will ask you just to
23 say nothing, and I will move on to the next
24 party. And we'll start -- and I will
25 clarify, you may address the -- your concerns
26 with the scope, as well as schedule.

27 National Diversity Coalition.

28 SPEAKER GONDAI: Thank you, your Honor.

1 Can you hear me?

2 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: You're soft.

3 SPEAKER GONDAI: I'll try to speak more
4 directly into the mic.

5 In our opening comments, we had
6 inadvertently overlooked the -- I believe it
7 was the 11th update, and so we would just
8 like to amend or update our comments to say
9 that we do support the positions of other
10 parties seeking adequate time to prepare for
11 the workshop and to respond to the proposal.

12 And then you mentioned that you're
13 also looking for comments on scope, as well,
14 at this time?

15 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: To the extent you
16 have additional comments beyond what you
17 already filed.

18 SPEAKER GONDAI: Oh, I see. No
19 additional comments on scope. Thank you.

20 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you.

21 NRDC.

22 SPEAKER CHHABRA: Good afternoon, your
23 Honor. Can you hear and see me?

24 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: I cannot see you,
25 but -- now I can. So please go ahead.

26 SPEAKER CHHABRA: Well, I'm Mohit from
27 the Natural Resources Defense Council, and
28 I'd like to reiterate a couple of things

1 related to the Phase 2 scope -- the scope of
2 Phase 3.

3 And NRDC is concerned and interested
4 in making sure that the clean energy
5 transition is as affordable as possible for
6 all customers, and to that end, the
7 Commission and stakeholders need to make sure
8 that electric rates and bills must be
9 affordable, provide savings when customers
10 electrify, which is the key part of our
11 decarbonization strategy, and be progressive.
12 So it's critical that the total energy burden
13 for all Californians kept in check, and this
14 proceeding is uniquely situated to help
15 figure that out. And to do that, this
16 proceeding also needs to consider gas
17 affordability, which is the question that
18 you've raised in the beginning. And the
19 long-term gas planning proceeding further
20 recently released Track 2 OIR --

21 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Mohit Chhabra, excuse
22 me.

23 (Crosstalk.)

24 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: And I'm sorry. I am
25 looking for comments simply on Phase 2. And
26 absolutely --

27 SPEAKER CHHABRA: I'm sorry. Yeah.

28 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: -- we stand to get to

1 Phase 3; but, I'd rather keep it together, so
2 we --

3 SPEAKER CHHABRA: Okay.

4 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Yeah. So --

5 SPEAKER CHHABRA: Apologize for that.
6 Thank you.

7 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you so much.
8 Okay.

9 Pacific Gas and Electric.

10 SPEAKER ROACH: Hello. Darren Roach
11 again.

12 On the schedule, we filed comments,
13 but we understand the sentiments, and don't
14 object to the concerns that -- given the
15 number of issues that more time may be
16 devoted, and more party input would help with
17 a final decision. That's on the schedule.

18 I have two comments on the scope of
19 Phase 2, and it's a response to comments that
20 were filed by other parties. Is that
21 something you also wanted to hear now?

22 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Yes.

23 SPEAKER ROACH: Right now, very
24 briefly, as I understand, East Bay Community
25 Energy, City and County of San Francisco,
26 Peninsula Clean Energy, the three, filed
27 comments asking for -- and I want to be sure
28 to get it right -- to evaluate -- use the

1 metrics, but to evaluate previous decisions
2 to develop a sense of the range of historical
3 costs of past decisions. PG&E would
4 recommend not that -- that issue not be
5 included in scope of Phase 2. I think Phase
6 2 has already identified that there are going
7 to be issues with implementation of these
8 metrics on a forward-looking basis, and then
9 looking to mitigate future increases costs,
10 and that taking these metrics and applying
11 them in a backward-looking manner to past
12 decisions does not address the issue and
13 scope about how do you -- how do we look and
14 investigate and mitigate future increases.

15 Very briefly, then, I'm going to
16 move on to the second issue, and I believe
17 TURN and I believe NDC raised this, and I'm
18 not sure about NDC, but, non-discretionary
19 expenses were addressed in comments, and very
20 briefly, I believe non-discretionary expenses
21 were fully addressed in a final decision in
22 Phase 1, and that the scoping memo was only
23 identifying what it was changing to conform
24 the scoping memo to the Phase 1 decision, and
25 that any action regarding non-discretionary
26 expenses should be a procedural form of a --
27 of -- of petition for modification, and not
28 included in the scope of this proceeding --

1 of the next phase of this proceeding.

2 Those are my two comment -- three
3 comments, your Honor.

4 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you, Darren
5 Roach.

6 And, yes, other parties may heed
7 Darren Roach's response to what you may have
8 reviewed in comments. That's -- that's
9 completely appropriate for the prehearing
10 conference.

11 Public Advocates Office.

12 SPEAKER OBIORA: Thank you, your Honor.
13 The Public Advocates Office would, primarily
14 on Phase 2, like to really mention again that
15 it's time to prioritize the rate and bill
16 impacts tracking to -- for Class A water
17 utilities. It's been about a year. The past
18 year, I would note the Public Advocates
19 Office filed a motion. The modeling for this
20 implementation is -- has been advanced to --
21 to a point where prioritizing it in Phase 2
22 would not be a problem. We don't really
23 see -- in the time since the third amended
24 scoping memo, we have not really seen any
25 substantive opposition to this
26 prioritization, and we're hoping that it will
27 be something that the -- that this proceeding
28 will bring to the fore going forward.

1 With respect to the sched- --

2 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Noel Obiora, I have a
3 question. It is within the scope. So what
4 sort of prioritization are you suggesting?

5 SPEAKER OBIORA: Implementation.
6 It's -- it has been within the scope -- it
7 has been in the scope since, I believe, even
8 the last -- even the last scoping -- scoping
9 of this proceeding. I -- I believe a lot of
10 work has been done in terms of developing the
11 model, and -- and we're trying to see that it
12 goes out into the -- into the industry to
13 have it being used, at least, so that we see
14 how it -- it begins to be -- the two begins
15 to -- it's applied going forward.

16 And so -- I guess what I'm saying in
17 terms of the scope is the scope should --
18 it's not just enough to mention it in the
19 scope. How we then proceed to begin to test
20 the tool and see how it's used going forward
21 should be better defined and -- and -- is
22 what we're trying to see, in terms of
23 prioritization.

24 Should I go forward with my other
25 minor comment? I think -- I think with --
26 with scheduling, essentially, what -- what --
27 what we're saying is that, given the broad
28 scope, range of issues scoped, and the

1 timeline provided, some guidance will be
2 necessary to understand how those issues will
3 be commented on, narrowed or focused for
4 purposes of the workshop, and to also ensure
5 that it's not a workshop where people just
6 bring attendees, but not bring the primary
7 people who are responsible for the various
8 industries to address particular issues where
9 we now start having multiple workshops
10 splintered to be able to -- that delays
11 things, because we now have -- want
12 sub-workshops to address certain issues,
13 because some people weren't there when they
14 were supposed to. Those are the type of
15 clarifications we think may be necessary. I
16 don't really know, at this point, how much
17 time it will take to do that, or whether the
18 time available is not sufficient to address
19 what's in the scope; but, some clarification
20 would be necessary before the workshops and
21 the comments. Thank you.]

22 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you, Noel
23 Obiora.

24 I want to be sensitive to the fact
25 that parties have not yet seen the Phase 2
26 staff proposal nor a detailed agenda for the
27 workshop and encourage parties, as we have
28 very active months of November and December,

1 to communicate to this proceeding either
2 formally or informally with any specifics you
3 have that you might find helpful for the
4 workshop that's completely within parties'
5 ability to do, and I think it enhances the
6 proceeding.

7 So we are aware that you don't have
8 a lot of details, but you may also reference
9 the release of the first affordability report
10 and the extent to which it covered various
11 topics as somewhat of a guide of what to
12 expect.

13 Okay. Let's move on. Again, as
14 long as you're responding or providing new
15 information other than what you filed in your
16 comments, that would be quite helpful because
17 we do want to get to Phase 3 as well.

18 Next I will ask Sierra Club.

19 SPEAKER VESPA: We have nothing to add
20 to Phase 2, your Honor.

21 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Great. And I'm going
22 to just assume, after I pause and hear
23 nothing, that you have nothing to add for all
24 other parties. So feel free not to respond
25 if you don't want to jump in.

26 Small Business Utility Advocates.

27 (No response.)

28 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. I'm going to

1 next call on Southern California Edison.

2 SPEAKER BRIGGS: Thank you, your Honor.
3 William Briggs for Southern California
4 Edison.

5 Just briefly on the schedule,
6 Southern California Edison shares the concern
7 expressed by a few parties that the schedule
8 may be too condensed given the number of
9 issues in scope. Certainly recognize that we
10 haven't seen the staff proposal and the staff
11 proposal will help direct us, but a little
12 more time may be needed in the schedule to
13 accommodate the vast array of issues.

14 Second, what is within scope,
15 Southern California Edison agrees with
16 Pacific Gas and Electric regarding
17 nondiscretionary expenses. I feel that, you
18 know, that issue was fully litigated in
19 Phase 1. We have a lot to do in Phase 2 and
20 Phase 3, and I think we should focus on all
21 the myriad of other issues for Phase 2 at
22 this point. Thank you.

23 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you, William
24 Briggs.

25 I have now been informed that the
26 Southwest Gas representative Vincent Vitatoe
27 has rejoined us, so I will call on Vincent
28 Vitatoe, please.

1 SPEAKER VITATOE: Yes. Are you able to
2 hear me?

3 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Yes, Vincent Vitatoe.
4 Go ahead.

5 SPEAKER VITATOE: Okay. Great. Sorry
6 about the IT issues, and I extend my thanks
7 to your IT people.

8 I just wanted to first make an
9 appearance. Vincent Vitatoe on behalf of
10 Southwest Gas. We have nothing else to add
11 thus far. Don't need a transcript either.

12 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. I will
13 actually go out of alphabetical order and
14 call on Melissa Kasnitz now. If I hear
15 nothing, then I'll proceed to our next party
16 on Phase 2.

17 SPEAKER KASNITZ: Thank you, your
18 Honor. I have nothing to add beyond what was
19 submitted in our written comments.

20 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: The Utility Reform
21 Network.

22 SPEAKER CHENG: Thank you, your Honor.
23 I just want to briefly add that while we
24 understand parties need time to address the
25 issues, we feel like there's an urgency to
26 implementing these metrics.

27 This proceeding has been going on
28 for more than three years, and we haven't

1 even gotten to the point of implementing the
2 metrics yet. So I feel a lot of urgency in
3 resolving the implementation issues as soon
4 as possible.

5 We have urged the Commission to
6 implement this in PG&E's GRC, for example,
7 and, you know, if we don't implement this
8 before the next GRC that comes up, it's
9 really a lost opportunity. Thank you.

10 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you.

11 Utility Consumer Action Network.

12 (No response.)

13 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Great. We will
14 continue with San Diego Gas & Electric.

15 SPEAKER COHEN: Thank you. Can you
16 hear me?

17 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Sharon Cohen, yes, I
18 can hear you.

19 SPEAKER COHEN: Great. We did not file
20 comments on the proceeding, length of the
21 proceeding and schedule; however, after
22 looking at the various parties' comments, we
23 believe and share the concern expressed by
24 many of them that the amount of time
25 necessary should be extended for parties to
26 review the staff proposal as well as to
27 participate fully in the workshop or
28 potential workshops and submit comments.

1 We agree with TURN that, you know,
2 time is ticking and we do want to do this
3 expeditiously but believe the schedule is a
4 little too ambitious as written.

5 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Sharon Cohen, thank
6 you. And just to clarify, you did file
7 comments jointly, correct, but you are saying
8 you didn't address a Phase 2 part?

9 SPEAKER COHEN: That's correct.

10 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you.

11 We have our new parties to the
12 proceeding, Peninsula Clean Energy Authority,
13 Doug Karpa?

14 SPEAKER KARPA: Yes. Hi. I think I
15 should be able to get video this time.
16 Maybe.

17 Anyway, I just wanted to briefly
18 respond to PG&E's comment that we not look at
19 historical decisions as well. The intent
20 merely is to provide context for decision
21 makers. If I tell you there's an
22 affordability ratio impact of .02, it's very
23 difficult to know if that's a large impact or
24 a small one historically. So I would urge
25 that we keep at least the topic in scope, and
26 it may -- I fully understand that that may
27 look like we just don't have time.

28 But that's a substantive discussion

1 rather than a scoped one. Otherwise, I have
2 nothing to add and we don't need a
3 transcript. Thank you.

4 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you.

5 Small Business Utility Advocates,
6 Jeff Winmill.

7 (No response.)

8 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you, Jeff
9 Winmill. I'll take the pause as nothing to
10 add.

11 John Kennedy.

12 SPEAKER KENNEDY: Nothing to add.
13 Thank you.

14 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Will Abrams.

15 SPEAKER ABRAMS: Thank you, your Honor.
16 I wanted to look at public participation
17 hearings as something to add to the scope in
18 Phase 2. I think gauging with a perspective
19 directly from the public regarding
20 implementation, I think, is going to be
21 really important.

22 I understand and certainly respect
23 the comments that came before about not
24 wanting to stretch this out, but at the same
25 time, I think, you know, including that
26 within the proceeding would be very helpful.

27 So I'm not sure if you're looking to
28 have sort of oral motions at this point, but

1 I certainly would like to put forward an oral
2 motion for public participation hearings.

3 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Will Abrams, amongst
4 the many scoped issues in Phase 2, which
5 particularly would be appropriate for public
6 participation hearings?

7 SPEAKER ABRAMS: You know, I think
8 generally it's right on affordability, I
9 think, it makes sense to get the public
10 engaged and so I think that it's hard for the
11 Commission to move forward on any of the
12 scope without, you know, without gauging
13 directly from the public what their
14 perspective is on the rollout.

15 So I just think it's always a good
16 practice for the Commission, particularly on
17 sort of pocketbook issues for ratepayers.
18 Certainly the folks in the hearing room have
19 perspective on all of those things, but
20 getting out directly to folks to understand
21 how these impacts relate to them is really
22 important.

23 So I would, again, think it's just a
24 prudent path given the subject to really hold
25 the public participation hearings.

26 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you, Will
27 Abrams.

28 I will pause again now and see if I

1 did not call on a party who wishes to address
2 Phase 2 or if there's any final comments
3 based on what you've heard. So I'm going to
4 suggest one more time that if you would like
5 to make one more comment on Phase 2 or did
6 not yet get a chance, that you utilize the
7 electronic hand function.

8 At the same time, I will encourage
9 you to please lower your electronic hands
10 right now if you've forgotten to do so from
11 earlier. So I'm going to scan the electronic
12 hands at this moment.

13 I see Tadashi Gondai. Your
14 electronic hand is raised, so please go
15 ahead.

16 SPEAKER GONDAI: Is that me, Tadashi
17 Gondai?

18 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Tadashi Gondai. I
19 apologize. I'm --

20 SPEAKER GONDAI: No problem.

21 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: -- looking at three
22 different screens and pieces of each name pop
23 up, so please forgive me.

24 SPEAKER GONDAI: No problem.

25 Yes, I would like to just briefly
26 respond to PG&E's statement regarding
27 nondiscretionary funds.

28 NDC did file comments on that matter

1 and we were encouraging the Commission to
2 include them within the scope of Phase 2.
3 Essentially the idea that somehow
4 nondiscretionary funding -- or
5 nondiscretionary expenses was fully addressed
6 in Phase 1 seems inconsistent with the
7 decision that was issued in Phase 1 that
8 specifically reserved that issue for Phase 2.

9 The amended scoping memo now
10 removing it, while we understand that that
11 may, you know, try to streamline issues or
12 focus on implementation, we really -- NDC is
13 really encouraging the Commission to
14 reconsider that as any kind of understanding
15 of costs or expenses outside of the context
16 of what the other nondiscretionary expenses
17 the ratepayers face is really lacks
18 usefulness.

19 Our concern is that if the matter is
20 not addressed here, then in every subsequent
21 proceeding where affordability issues are
22 raised and these metrics are used, parties
23 will just have to continually relitigate
24 appropriate context bringing in experts,
25 testifying what all the different ways...

26 COMMISSIONER HOUCK: Judge, we can't
27 hear you. You're on mute I think.

28 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: I am just asking you

1 to speak more slowly for the benefit of the
2 court reporter. Thank you.

3 SPEAKER GONDAI: Yes, your Honor.

4 Our concern was just that if the
5 issue of nondiscretionary expenses is not
6 addressed here, the matter will need to be
7 relitigated in all future proceedings that do
8 involve these affordability metrics.

9 And so for the sake of Commission
10 resources and stakeholder resources, it made
11 sense that at least some of the major
12 nondiscretionary expenses could be laid out
13 and parameters and boundaries established to
14 provide guidance for how to apply it in the
15 future. Thank you.

16 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you.

17 California Water Association, Willis
18 Hon, please go ahead. And please do lower
19 your electronic hands when you're done.

20 SPEAKER HON: Thank you, your Honor.
21 This is Willis Hon for California Water
22 Association.

23 We did not file comments on the
24 scoping memo, but with respect to the scoping
25 memo on the scoped issues, we don't have any
26 objections and believe that the scoping memo
27 has the correct issues laid out as modified.

28 With respect to the schedule,

1 generally we don't have any objections to the
2 proposed schedule, although I will note that
3 for the November 15th workshop currently
4 scheduled, that in the large water utility
5 cost of capital proceeding that's been
6 consolidated as proceeding A.21-05-001, we
7 had discussed a proposed schedule during the
8 prehearing conference that proposed
9 evidentiary hearings taking place that week,
10 including on November 15th.

11 However, a scoping memo has not yet
12 been issued for that proceeding, so I would
13 just ask, to the extent that you do move any
14 of the dates, that you keep the evidentiary
15 hearings in that proceeding in mind along
16 with this workshop because we would like to
17 attend the workshop as well. Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER HOUCK: And I'm the
19 assigned Commissioner in both of those
20 proceedings so I'll make sure that Judge
21 Watts-Zagha coordinates with Judge Haga to
22 make sure the schedules are not conflicting.

23 SPEAKER HON: Thank you, your Honor.
24 Appreciate it.

25 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you,
26 Commissioner.

27 I will pause one more moment before
28 we turn away from Phase 2. So, again, use

1 the electronic hand function now. Excellent.

2 It looks like we are at time to turn
3 to the Phase 3, schedule and scope. To
4 begin, I would like to let parties know that
5 in response to some of the comments we
6 received, the written comments, that it is
7 our intention to add additional workshops to
8 the Phase 3 schedule.

9 I'll start by saying that on the
10 existing schedule you have before you, you
11 will see a workshop in early 2022,
12 February 2022, after the scoping memo and
13 ruling is finalized.

14 We intend to add two additional
15 workshops to the schedule, one after party
16 proposals to mitigate energy rate increases
17 are served in August 2022. We'll add a
18 workshop on the formal proposals. And then
19 finally we will add another workshop, a third
20 workshop, after the staff proposal is
21 released in 2023.

22 I'm going to go down our list of
23 participants today and ask you each to
24 address the schedule with these additions as
25 well as the scope and, of course, the topic
26 of whether gas rates and bills should be
27 included in the scope.

28 We will also ask you if you did not

1 address the scoping memo that came out on
2 October 14th in the gas transmission
3 rulemaking, that you may add comments based
4 on your review of that scope. Also with
5 regard to the gas issue, perhaps think about
6 if gas was not included in the scope of
7 Phase 3, what would be lost.

8 So at this point I will turn to
9 parties in roughly alphabetical order.
10 Hopefully each party will have something to
11 add on the scope of Phase 3. All right.

12 We'll begin at this time with Center
13 For Accessible Technology, Melissa Kasnitz.

14 SPEAKER KASNITZ: Thank you, your
15 Honor. This is Melissa Kasnitz.

16 We did submit written comments. I'm
17 afraid we tried to address the new scoping
18 memo in the natural gas proceeding, but that
19 didn't make it in so I'll begin with that
20 issue.

21 The issue most squarely focused
22 on -- let me step back. We did recommend
23 including natural gas issues in Phase 3 of
24 this proceeding prior to our review of the
25 new scoping memo in the natural gas
26 proceeding, and the release of that scoping
27 memo has not changed our position.

28 The element of the scoping memo in

1 the natural gas proceeding that most squarely
2 affects affordability is the one that focuses
3 on rate design changes and current cost
4 allocations for natural gas, and that's set
5 to be addressed in Track 2-C of the natural
6 gas proceeding, which is the last track of
7 the second phase.

8 In the new scoping memo, no schedule
9 is set whatsoever yet for Track C of Phase 2.
10 So the delay in squarely addressing
11 affordability, if we defer it to the natural
12 gas proceeding, is likely to be substantial.

13 I think there are valid reasons to
14 address it here because the move away from
15 natural gas will very much impact
16 affordability of electricity as well, but
17 even were that not the case, the schedule in
18 the natural gas proceeding does not foster
19 rapid review of this issue.]

20 On the issues squarely within the
21 scope before considering natural gas, I'd
22 like to note that affordability needs to look
23 at multiple components of energy rates.
24 There's the total revenue that the
25 electricity -- I'm sorry -- the energy IOU
26 sheet and the impact of total revenues on
27 customer bills.

28 There are issues of rate design and

1 how the total revenue is allocated among the
2 various customer classes. And there's the
3 issue of support programs, both how those
4 impact the bills of customers who are
5 eligible and how paying for them impacts the
6 bills of the customers who support them.
7 Tied into that are the questions in the
8 scoping memo of whether some of these
9 programs could be supported in other ways,
10 for example, by taxpayers rather than
11 ratepayers for which I support considering.

12 And I also do want to re-raise the
13 issue of essential use, which is scoped in
14 Phase 2. It says no one is trying to claim
15 that customers should be able to afford to
16 use however much energy they care to. We
17 want to make sure that affordability is tied
18 to customers' ability to use the amounts of
19 energy that are essential for their health,
20 comfort and safety. And those amounts might
21 change with the move away from natural gas
22 and to electricity.

23 So there's a lot of issues. I
24 appreciate the addition of the new proposals.
25 I continue to think natural gas does belong
26 in Phase 2. And that concludes my remarks
27 for the moment.

28 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you, Melissa

1 Kasnitz.

2 And now Willis Hon with California
3 Water Association.

4 SPEAKER HON: Thank you, your Honor.
5 This is Willis Hon with California Water
6 Association. It is our understanding that
7 the scoping memo -- the fourth amended
8 scoping memo in this proceeding mentioned
9 that the scope of Phase 3 is particular to
10 energy industry issues, and therefore, the
11 scoping memo indicates that the Commission
12 may revisit affordability specific to the
13 water and communications industries in the
14 subsequent phase of this proceeding as well
15 as in the low-income water affordability
16 proceeding R.17-06-024.

17 And so to the extent that water
18 utility issues are going to be addressed
19 later on in the subsequent phase of this
20 proceeding, we don't have any comments as to
21 Phase 3 but look forward to participating in
22 this proceeding.

23 Thank you.

24 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Shana Lazerow.

25 SPEAKER LAZEROW: Thank you, your
26 Honor. And thank you for granting us motion
27 to intervene. We are a coalition of
28 environmental justice groups. We organize in

1 low-income communities of color throughout
2 the State of California. And among our
3 membership are included some of the most
4 energy-burdened ratepayers and community
5 members whose interests are vital to be heard
6 in this particular affordability proceeding.

7 I wanted to first address also the
8 question of whether to consider gas as well
9 as electricity. And we strongly support
10 including both energy-burdened is an entire
11 picture. I think looking at the question of
12 electricity in isolation especially as we
13 move toward electrification of homes and
14 decarbonization of buildings.

15 And we are also a party to the gas
16 proceeding, and we understand that at some
17 protracted point we will be discussing these
18 issues to an extent there as well. But the
19 affordability proceeding -- this proceeding
20 is going to be looking much more holistically
21 at our community members' needs. So we would
22 strongly support including gas in Phase 3 of
23 this proceeding. I also wanted to briefly
24 address the prospect of circling back to
25 water and communications affordability. Both
26 of these issues are vital to our community
27 members as well.

28 And just as with energy-burdened,

1 this -- this would be an appropriate space as
2 we develop metrics to look at affordability
3 to also consider water and communications.
4 So we would support that and appreciate
5 seeing it coming down the line.

6 Thank you.

7 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you.

8 Tadashi Gondai, National Diversity
9 Coalition.

10 SPEAKER GONDAI: Thank you, your Honor.
11 I believe that most of the other parties'
12 comments regarding including natural gas into
13 the scope of the proceeding here are in line
14 with our original comments. And so I don't
15 want to say too much more to repeat. I just
16 wanted to also highlight the overlap between
17 this affordability proceeding's purview to
18 look at nondiscretionary expenses as also
19 being relevant as to why it's a better forum
20 to discuss the impact of the transition to
21 natural gas on ratepayers' bills in general.

22 As there are shifts between both
23 housing or building decarbonization as well
24 as transportation electrification, you know,
25 the individual customers will start to see
26 probably higher electricity bills and being
27 able to evaluate whether natural gas bills
28 are still affordable in the context of the

1 holistic budgets that these households face.
2 It's much more relevant than being able to
3 examine simply it from the natural gas
4 perspective, which is our understanding of
5 the focus of the natural gas transition
6 proceeding.

7 We were able to confirm in the
8 October 14th scoping memo in the gas
9 transition proceeding that they are
10 considering affordability, but it does not
11 change the limited scope of what they are
12 looking at as compared to the proceeding
13 here. It is able to take into account much
14 more holistically and much more substantively
15 the impacts overall to a household's budget.
16 And so we continue to support including
17 natural gas in the proceeding.

18 Thank you.

19 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: And Natural Resources
20 Defense Counsel, Mohit Chhabra.

21 SPEAKER CHHABRA: Good afternoon, your
22 Honor. Most of what I wanted to say has been
23 said. I will just add the fact that although
24 the gas OIR is considering how to keep gas
25 affordable in the transition, the question
26 remains open, affordable with respect to
27 what? And this proceeding is answering some
28 of those broad questions.

1 And, you know, we need to have gas
2 rates and bills be affordable and electric
3 rates and bills be affordable with --
4 relative to each other and for customers who
5 choose to electrify, which is a key tenant of
6 decarbonization.

7 So with that, we support gas being
8 included in the scope of Phase 3.

9 Thank you very much.

10 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: I'd like to go out of
11 order actually and ask William Briggs with
12 Southern California Edison to address Phase 3
13 next.

14 SPEAKER BRIGGS: Thank you, your Honor.
15 First we appreciate and support the addition
16 of two additional workshops of Phase 3. We
17 think that's a great idea and will allow for
18 more comprehensive analysis of the
19 complicated issues at play. Besides that, I
20 don't have much to add besides what we said
21 in our comments. We do think the impact of
22 natural gas is certainly relevant to Phase 3
23 in the issues that will be considered. The
24 question as to whether specific strategies to
25 mitigate natural gas impact should be
26 considered in this proceeding or the natural
27 gas proceeding, we're agnostic. But we do
28 think and the Commission should certainly

1 coordinate between the two proceedings to
2 make sure that it's handled efficiently.

3 Thank you.

4 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. Perhaps
5 we can hear from Sharon Cohen, San Diego Gas
6 & Electric.

7 SPEAKER COHEN: Thank you. We also
8 support the addition of two additional
9 workshops in this proceeding. And I am going
10 to defer comments on whether gas should be
11 included in this proceeding to Southern
12 California Gas Company, which is Mr.
13 Gressler.

14 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. Well, I
15 will take that cue and turn now to Eric
16 Gressler with Southern California Gas
17 Company.

18 SPEAKER GRESSLER: Thank you, your
19 Honor. You read our comments, and we talked
20 about why we thought that gas shouldn't be
21 included in this particular proceeding
22 because it's going to be addressed in the gas
23 reliability OIR. You know, the primary
24 concern that we have is it's going to be
25 duplicating efforts. So it's going to be
26 extra work for the Commission. It's going to
27 be extra work for the parties and the
28 stakeholders and some concern about conflicts

1 or other things that, you know, might come
2 out this proceeding that are different than
3 the gas reliability decisions or things that
4 come out of the gas reliability that, you
5 know, conflict with this.

6 I'll note that our comments did
7 address the amended scoping memo issued
8 October 14th in the gas reliability. And we
9 also talked about the four things -- you
10 know, four items within that scope that talk
11 about affordability, and I'm not going to
12 read them because your court reporters will
13 probably be irritated if I do. But, you
14 know, there's a number of things in there
15 talking about affordability.

16 You know, I understand some of the
17 comments are about the timing, you know, and
18 how the gas reliability proceeding is, you
19 know, on a slower pace. And I'll acknowledge
20 that there's no schedule set for 2-C in the
21 gas reliability. I'm sorry. But you know,
22 the schedule that we have for Phase 3 here
23 has a proposed decision for Q2 2023, and I
24 don't know that that's going to be that far
25 off from what's happening in the gas planning
26 OIR.

27 You know, finally, just at a
28 minimum, I think, you know, there's going to

1 be a need for extreme coordination between
2 these proceedings because they are going to
3 be addressing the same issues with regard to
4 gas affordability.

5 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: I have two questions,
6 Eric Gressler. What would be lost in this
7 affordability framework proceeding by
8 addressing only energy rates? That's my
9 first question.

10 SPEAKER GRESSLER: With regard to --
11 with regard to everything but gas?

12 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: No. With regard to
13 electric and gas in Phase 3 or electric only
14 if we were to document Southern California
15 Gas' recommendation to focus on electric.

16 SPEAKER GRESSLER: I think it
17 potentially would conflict with what's
18 happening in the gas OIR. And -- you seem
19 dissatisfied with that answer.

20 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Well, my question is
21 what would be lost in this affordability
22 proceeding by focusing only on electric
23 rates?

24 SPEAKER GRESSLER: I don't know, your
25 Honor.

26 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. My second
27 question is do you have a model of good
28 coordination between two proceedings that you

1 could point to?

2 SPEAKER GRESSLER: I do not, but I
3 could certainly ask my colleagues.

4 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you. All
5 right. Back to alphabetical order, to some
6 extent.

7 Darren Roach, Pacific Gas and
8 Electric.

9 SPEAKER ROACH: Darren Roach here. And
10 Mr. Gressler largely -- I was largely going
11 to echo what Mr. Gressler said as to why
12 gas -- consideration of gas commodity and
13 affordability proceeding should defer to the
14 gas OIR. So I won't repeat all those. I
15 would say -- you know, "holistic" has been
16 used. I might be overusing that word. But
17 the gas OIR is holistically, with a number of
18 experts of very knowledgeable people, looking
19 at the overall long-term strategy of the gas
20 system. So while they're looking at all
21 those factors and items -- matters that may
22 affect costs, they'll have a much broader
23 holistic view of the gas system and in that
24 regard may be able to maybe -- let me step
25 back from that but at least say because of
26 that holistic view have much more input into
27 factors that affect specifically the gas
28 commodity. I'll add that on.

1 I understand that the -- and
2 appreciate that, you know, the schedule is an
3 issue. But having the expertise from that
4 gas OIR that one -- in that one proceeding
5 that's dealing specifically with gas, and
6 whereas, affordability you have to deal with
7 other telecommunications order and other
8 commodities, maybe the gas there.

9 You raise the question about -- I
10 think it was more about coordination. And I
11 can't deny that's always a consideration if
12 that happens, but I would like to think that
13 the coordination could be where the inputs on
14 gas -- hopefully we can look to the gas
15 experts first to deliver the inputs from the
16 gas OIR and bring them into the affordability
17 proceeding perhaps rather other way around
18 where affordability proceeding may be looking
19 at overall affordability but then issues of
20 rulings that really could cause problems or
21 conflicts with what's going on in the gas
22 OIR.

23 And the other comments are there --
24 all my comments are about we do have a lot of
25 resources -- gas resources devoted to the gas
26 OIR, and it would be a real burden having
27 them duplicate efforts in the two
28 proceedings.

1 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. Doug
2 Karpa with Peninsula Clean Energy Authority,
3 are you prepared to address Phase 3?

4 SPEAKER KARPA: Yes, briefly. I
5 think -- we don't have a whole lot to say,
6 but I do think we would support the inclusion
7 of gas simply on an argument that
8 customer-focused approach to this would
9 really suggest that we customers pay, you
10 know, the whole range of utility bills. And
11 from that perspective, it would be important
12 to consider particularly if there are
13 trade-offs or interactions between gas
14 electricity since in a lot of cases there are
15 electric and gas alternatives, say, for heat
16 and cooking and so forth. And if we're
17 getting into reducing energy use overall and
18 looking at more energy efficiency
19 considerations, it could be important to
20 really consider how those interact to shape,
21 you know, the entire utility bill.

22 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Doug Karpa, great.
23 So could you actually put it in terms of what
24 would be lost by leaving gas out of Phase 3?

25 SPEAKER KARPA: I would envision what
26 might be lost if we focus solely on
27 electricity would be opportunities to
28 potentially -- either to, you know,

1 potentially reduce electric bills more by
2 helping customers switch more to gas or
3 alternatively may be able to lower overall
4 utility bills if electrification turns out to
5 be the more cost effective option. And so we
6 would -- could potentially lose opportunities
7 to reduce customer bills if we are not
8 considering them jointly.

9 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you.

10 Noel Obiora, Public Advocates
11 Office.

12 SPEAKER OBIORA: Thank you, your Honor.
13 We don't really have much to add to what
14 we've stated in our comments. I believe we
15 also mentioned that the -- we are concerned
16 about the likely duplication between the gas
17 OIR and this proceeding and would have liked
18 to have the gas issues taken care of in the
19 OIR proceeding. But listening to all the
20 parties' comments and how they are addressing
21 it, I think one thing that comes to mind is
22 that this question does not necessarily have
23 to be addressed now because you find that the
24 question is how much of -- how much of what's
25 being done in the rulemaking proceeding would
26 have to be done in this proceeding in order
27 to get us to the point where we can make that
28 determination on affordability.

1 So I think we essentially look at it
2 in terms of efficiency and in terms of
3 staffing and felt that because the other
4 proceeding was more invested and more -- had
5 a more broader scope for gas strategies,
6 perhaps it's the best place to address it.

7 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Noel Obiora, so
8 leaving aside the sort of logistical nature
9 of the two proceedings which other parties
10 have also raised, in terms of a policy
11 perspective, would anything be lost by
12 restricting it to electric rate issues?

13 SPEAKER OBIORA: I believe the holistic
14 approach that this proceeding had envisioned
15 from the beginning would -- would be -- would
16 lose something by restricting electric rate
17 issues, but I think in our comments that was
18 not what we envisioned. We were not
19 envisioning restricting -- I'm sorry -- with
20 restricting Phase 3 to electric rate --
21 restricting this proceeding to electric rate
22 issues. We were envisioning sort of an
23 instance where the information in this
24 proceeding would need with respect to gas
25 affordability can be taken from where it has
26 been better developed and can be used -- with
27 coordination to be used in this proceeding.

28 So it was not our intention to say

1 don't consider gas affordability at all in
2 the affordability proceeding. We just
3 thought that the development of the
4 information and strategies that would inform
5 the affordability proceeding can be started
6 or initiated in the OIR whereby this
7 proceeding cannot coordinate and obtain
8 information from that.]

9 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you. Vincent
10 Vitatoe with Southwest Gas.

11 SPEAKER VITATOE: Yes. This is Vincent
12 Vitatoe.

13 And we would essentially echo, and
14 not really expand much, on the comments that
15 support keeping the level of distinction, but
16 coordination. We think that's the best
17 approach, and -- and really don't have much
18 to add, other than that.

19 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Matt Vespa with the
20 Sierra Club.

21 SPEAKER VESPA: Thank you, your Honor.

22 Just to answer your question about
23 what we would lose, we lose the ability to
24 meaningfully address affordability, if we
25 leave gas affordability out of this
26 proceeding. The energy burdens are about
27 total bills, not from what energy source. So
28 we're really concerned about keeping this

1 out, and having it all in the gas planning
2 OIR.

3 And in response to some concerns
4 some of the gas utilities have made about
5 duplication, I do think there's ways to
6 navigate this. I mean the way I see the two
7 proceedings divided up is that we're talking
8 about mitigation strategies here, for
9 example, on electric system costs, and how do
10 we take certain things out of rates, how to
11 reduce the system costs. The gas planning
12 OIR is about gas system costs; are there ways
13 to avoid new capital investments in the
14 system, derating pipelines to address gas
15 system costs. That is the bulk of it.
16 That's where a lot of the expertise is going
17 to be. The people that know that don't know
18 very much about affordability. I think all
19 the experts in affordability are here. So
20 what do we lose? We lose those experts,
21 those perspectives, and we keep it there.

22 And so that's -- so when it gets to,
23 okay, you know, how do we address
24 affordability for low-income, this is the
25 place for that. There may be policies that
26 could apply both to electric and gas
27 customers that we should be thinking about
28 here, and don't want to split up. And if you

1 look at that scoping memo in the gas planning
2 OIR, as folks mentioned, I mean it's not even
3 calendered yet, out into late 2023, you know,
4 at best. And it actually asks, you know,
5 should this proceeding talk about the --
6 consider this or somewhere else. So it's not
7 locked in there. They're thinking that
8 through. And so I do think there are ways to
9 sort of delineate these in a way that makes
10 sense that doesn't duplicate, and really gets
11 the best out of both, and so having
12 affordability for gas -- mitigation
13 strategies on affordability here, but gas
14 system costs, those mitigation strategies for
15 cost of a system there is the best way to
16 navigate these proceedings with, of course,
17 coordination, as folks had mentioned.

18 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: I have a question,
19 since you referenced a category of customers
20 called low-income, and whether including gas
21 costs and rates would be equally important
22 for customers of all incomes, or if there's
23 something particular for low-income
24 customers.

25 SPEAKER VESPA: You know, I think it --
26 it is -- I think there's issues about how we
27 allocate gas rates, potentially different
28 customer classes, like broader questions,

1 that may be better for the gas planning OIR.
2 I mean this is all kind of coming down the
3 line later. I do think specific programs for
4 low-income customers, whether it's some kind
5 of income-based payment of bills, like those
6 types of programs that are really targeting
7 affordability for the most energy-burdened
8 Californians, that is here. There may be
9 other structural, bigger structural questions
10 about how we reallocate rates with declining
11 throughput that, you know, could be better
12 there. You know, but, I just think this
13 affordability piece for gas for -- for -- for
14 the most energy-burdened Californians does
15 need to be here, and the strategy should be
16 here.

17 So I -- I don't know how it's all
18 going to play out for some other bigger more
19 broadly applicable rate design questions.
20 You know, maybe that's something we cross
21 that bridge when we get closer to it.

22 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: David Cheng, The
23 Utility Reform Network.

24 SPEAKER CHENG: Thank you, your Honor.

25 I want to agree with largely what
26 Mr. Vespa said, and I will also add that, you
27 know, if we follow the gas utilities' logic
28 that affordability shouldn't be addressed

1 here, then we also shouldn't be addressing
2 electric affordability, and we should be
3 addressing that in the wildfire mitigation
4 proceedings or the grid modernization
5 proceedings. It absolutely makes no sense.
6 This is about affordability. This is not
7 about the future of the gas system or the
8 future of the electric infrastructure.
9 That's separate from the question of
10 affordability. Obviously, customers only
11 have one income for everything. They don't
12 have one income for gas, and one income for
13 electricity. So in order to see a holistic
14 view of affordability, they need to be
15 considered together.

16 Second, I'd like to just reiterate
17 what TURN said previously on comments that we
18 believe that telecom services and broadband
19 services also need to be considered. Now,
20 the Commission has already categorized these
21 as essential services, and we've all seen how
22 essential they are from the pandemic. So we
23 would urge the Commission to also include
24 them in Phase 3. Thank you.

25 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: What about water?

26 SPEAKER CHENG: Yes, water, too. It's
27 just that TURN doesn't typically address
28 water, but we would certainly encourage water

1 to be included, for holistic view of
2 affordability. Thank you.

3 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you. Okay.

4 Small Business Utility Advocates,
5 Jeff Winmill.

6 SPEAKER WINMILL: Sorry. Sorry, your
7 Honor. Sorry, your Honor.

8 We filed comments in support of
9 adding gas to this proceeding, and would just
10 echo the comments in support of that that
11 other parties have already mentioned.

12 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you, Jeff
13 Winmill.

14 Jane Krikorian.

15 SPEAKER KRIKORIAN: Yes, your Honor.
16 Sorry.

17 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: I cannot hear you.

18 SPEAKER KRIKORIAN: Cannot hear me?
19 Can you hear me now?

20 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Yes. Thank you.

21 SPEAKER KRIKORIAN: Excellent. Thank
22 you, your Honor.

23 This is Jane Krikorian for Utility
24 Consumers' Action Network, and we support the
25 addition of the additional workshops that
26 your Honor mentioned, and we also support the
27 addition of gas in Phase 3 for the reasons
28 already articulated by other consumer

1 advocates, and particularly on the issue of
2 overall affordability.

3 And in thinking about your question
4 what would be lost, I think if we were
5 farther down the road in electrifying all of
6 our homes, as California wishes to do, that
7 it would be appropriate to separate gas; but,
8 because we're far far away from that, and
9 unless California quickly decommissions
10 pipelines and everything, and takes that
11 billion-dollar savings, puts that into
12 electrifying homes, gas is still an issue.
13 So we do support adding that in Phase 3. And
14 thank you.

15 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you, Jane
16 Krikorian.

17 John Kennedy, Rural County
18 Representatives of California.

19 (No response.)

20 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. John
21 Kennedy, I will call on you again after Will
22 Abrams, representing himself.

23 SPEAKER ABRAMS: Thank you, your Honor.

24 Certainly appreciate the comments
25 from Ms. Lazerow, Ms. Kasnitz and Mr. Cheng
26 regarding a need for a broader scope.

27 I think -- when you're considering
28 gas, I think what's important also to

1 consider, as you're thinking about the
2 workshops, is making sure that those are
3 targeted workshops. So I would think that
4 it's really important for our ratepayers to
5 understand what their overarching bills are
6 going to be, and so understanding housing
7 costs, understanding insurance rates, I would
8 argue, are sort of more significant in terms
9 of looking at that trend in terms of how we
10 look at electric affordability. So I would
11 just put forward that it may be very
12 important for the Commission to look at
13 having a targeted workshop with the insurance
14 commission really presenting, along with
15 Housing and Community Development presenting,
16 in terms of what they see as the trends going
17 forward. There are some unique aspects of,
18 as an example, living in the wildlife-urban
19 interface, where we're seeing increased
20 threat of wildfire, and what those costs mean
21 around affordability. So I think it's really
22 important, as we look at this question of
23 affordability, that we are looking at it in
24 context, and so I would just put forward that
25 we make sure that -- that those topics are
26 really central, and not the amount of
27 workshops, but really making sure that the --
28 that the quality and -- and the content

1 within those workshops is -- is specified.

2 And I would also just want to put
3 forward to whatever extent public
4 participation hearings were important for
5 Phase 2, I -- I would say they're -- they're
6 doubly or triply important here in Phase 3,
7 because we do have a real breadth in terms of
8 the representation here amongst parties, but
9 I think that we will -- will really stand to
10 miss the mark if we don't actually go out to
11 the public and really ask them what they
12 think is affordability and what are the
13 impacts on them in terms of rates. So I
14 would again like to put forward a motion for
15 public participation hearings to make sure
16 that is included within the scope.

17 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Will Abrams, I will
18 remind you and everyone with regard to your
19 motions for public participation hearings
20 that the commissioner and I will discuss
21 these things, and the final determination
22 will be made in the final scoping memo.

23 But, you did reference several
24 suggestions for, you know, additional
25 entities at workshops. So do you have any
26 suggestions with regard to academic research
27 on the topic?

28 SPEAKER ABRAMS: Yeah, absolutely. I

1 think that that would be an important place
2 to turn to. I certainly, you know, after the
3 hearing, can put forward to the appropriate
4 staff folks that would be good to hit on
5 within academia. I would also say that there
6 are, you know, a number of different
7 nonprofits that are not regular
8 participate -- participants within the Public
9 Utilities Commission, but regularly
10 participate within the insurance commission
11 to provide that (inaudible) perspective. So
12 United Policyholders is an example of that
13 organization -- is -- is an organization that
14 focuses on insurance rates and affordability
15 within that space, and there are also many
16 organizations, obviously, in the nonprofit
17 space that host -- focus on housing
18 affordability, and I think including a -- a
19 representative panel, you're right to say
20 within academia, but also, you know, having
21 those -- those organizations participate to
22 understand not just what's happening in terms
23 of those trends, but how those relate, how
24 does our electric rates relate to
25 affordability on housing -- sorry. Go ahead.

26 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank -- thank you,
27 Will Abrams. I was just looking if there was
28 any specific name that popped to mind. But,

1 I do appreciate it. So thank you for
2 answering that question so thoroughly.

3 SPEAKER ABRAMS: All right.

4 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: I'm going to now
5 pause again and see if any party that I may
6 not have seen in the room wishes to address
7 Phase 3. So if you've not already spoken --
8 I see that Darren Roach has a hand up for
9 Pacific Gas and Electric, and I will note
10 that. But, first, I will see if I've missed
11 any party, and then, if not, I -- okay. I
12 also see a hand from Willis Hon. So those
13 are the two hands I have raised right now.
14 And perhaps you're putting them down. Okay.
15 It looks like Darren Roach is not interested
16 in making further questions -- or no. You
17 are. Your hand is still up. Okay.

18 SPEAKER ROACH: Yes, I -- I would.

19 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. Pause
20 just one moment so I see if there's any other
21 party that I missed first in the first round.

22 All right. We'll have remarks from
23 Darren Roach, followed by Willis Hon, and
24 then we will conclude, unless anybody else
25 raises their hand. Go ahead.

26 SPEAKER ROACH: Your Honor, Darren
27 Roach.

28 In a previous discussion, so much

1 momentum going around involving -- regarding
2 the discussion of gas. There is another
3 comment I wanted to make on another topic
4 raised in parties' comments regarding the
5 scope of Phase 3, and with your indulgence,
6 I'd like to spend just a minute or less just
7 to address that comment. I didn't want to
8 break the momentum for -- that was being
9 discussed around gas.

10 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Very good.

11 SPEAKER ROACH: Okay. And in doing so,
12 I realized it's the -- regarding the proposal
13 from TURN, and so by doing this in this
14 procedure -- I know Mr. Cheng is on the
15 phone. I don't mean to prevent, you know --
16 go around his ability to respond. But, TURN
17 raised an issue regarding a proposal to
18 include inflation-constrained showings and
19 parties' GRC requests, and that was in the
20 comments here regarding affordability; and I
21 just wanted to be sure by looking at his
22 notes. The issue of inflation-constrained
23 alternative requests in GRCs was raised in
24 PG&E's GRC, and though the motion wasn't
25 granted in PG&E's GRC, TURN certainly was
26 guided -- given guidance that it should
27 consider raising the issue in a broader
28 proceeding with more participants and more

1 IOUs. That's not the issue. The issue
2 is -- is that the GRC -- it's a GRC-specific
3 request. GRCs is such a large and unique
4 proceeding that it has its own -- it has its
5 own proceeding in a rate case plan in which
6 discusses how to administer GRCs. So the --
7 my main comment here, your Honor, is that an
8 issue on inflation-constrained requests
9 specific to GRCs should be raised in a
10 specific GRC rate case plan proceeding; this
11 way, TURN's request can be considered, along
12 with broader issues that affect the
13 administration of GRCs. So not raised here
14 in affordability, but raised in a rate case
15 proceeding -- rate case plan proceeding, when
16 you still have a broad base of participants.

17 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Darren Roach, am I
18 correct in -- did TURN raise this regarding
19 Phase 2 or Phase 3? I'm -- I'm forgetting
20 right now.

21 SPEAKER ROACH: I believe it was -- I'm
22 looking. It was on page 6 of the comment --
23 well, Mr. Cheng can respond. I thought it
24 was Phase 3 here of this proceeding.

25 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Okay. And,
26 Mr. Cheng, we'll get to you in just a moment,
27 if you do want to respond after Willis Hon;
28 but, you know, that's up to you.

1 So Willis Hon, did you intend to
2 make a further comment?

3 SPEAKER HON: Yes, your Honor. This is
4 Willis Hon for California Water Association.

5 I did just want to also respond to
6 something that Mr. Cheng said for TURN with
7 respect to adding water utilities into Phase
8 3 of the proceeding. CWA would oppose adding
9 that into -- well, I guess, technically,
10 the -- the point I wanted to raise is that
11 the affordability of water utility rates
12 are -- is already being addressed in Phase 3
13 of the Rulemaking 17-06-024. Your Honor
14 issued the third amended scoping memo in that
15 ruling -- in that proceeding, which
16 includes -- expressly includes within the
17 scope of issues what, if any, further
18 improvements to water affordability are
19 needed. And so, that proceeding has already
20 been addressing and will be addressing issues
21 of water utility affordability. And to the
22 extent that the Commission prefers to handle
23 it in one proceeding or the other, you know,
24 that -- that's to be determined. So CWA's
25 position, I guess, is that, you know,
26 whenever we do it, we just don't want it to
27 be duplicative, because I -- you know, this
28 takes a lot of work to participate in these

1 proceedings, and I believe it -- you know, if
2 we can allocate that in a certain way, it
3 would be most efficient. Thank you.

4 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you, Willis
5 Hon. And perhaps, through the schedule in
6 Phase 2, you could make specific suggestions
7 about coordination between the proceedings.
8 And, of course, this is becoming a theme
9 here, as this is a cross-industry rulemaking,
10 but it is useful for parties to address to
11 the Commission how information developed in
12 one proceeding may be transmitted effectively
13 to other proceedings, as well, other relevant
14 proceedings. So I -- I do encourage all
15 parties to make those kinds of connections,
16 and not necessarily just generally.

17 Let me check and see if I see any
18 other hands. Ah-ha, David Cheng has
19 indicated a desire to speak again. Thank
20 you. Go ahead.]

21 SPEAKER CHENG: Thank you, your Honor.
22 I'd like to briefly respond to Mr. Roach.
23 First, I would like to point out that the
24 scoping memo that's already been issued by
25 the Commission actually states on page seven
26 for the third phase its intention and its
27 purpose is to examine the strategies that's
28 previously been proposed, including the

1 en banc. At the same time, that very
2 proposal that Mr. Roach talked about --
3 (inaudible).

4 (Speaker's audio dropping out.)

5 THE REPORTER: This is the court
6 reporter. Mr. Cheng? Mr. Cheng? It's the
7 court reporter.

8 SPEAKER CHENG: Yes.

9 THE REPORTER: Your line is cutting in
10 and out and I am not able to follow. Your
11 picture is cutting out as well, so there may
12 be some connectivity issues.

13 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Let's pause for a
14 moment and then David Cheng can just decide
15 whether or not to turn his camera off. I
16 appreciate that it's on, but audio is best at
17 this point. Perfect. Good choice. Yes.

18 SPEAKER CHENG: Sure. Is this better?

19 (Inaudible) the scoping memo already
20 is supposed to address strategies with the
21 rate in the en banc, and the Commission
22 specifically listed the inflation -- the
23 inflation in the GRC request as one of those
24 strategies on page three of the scoping memo.
25 So we believe that that issue has already
26 been determined.

27 Second, while we appreciate
28 Mr. Roach's creative interpretation of the

1 Commission ruling, obviously the rate case
2 plan proceeding is not appropriate to discuss
3 whether inflation-constrained, you know,
4 proposal by utilities.

5 A rate case plan proceeding is to
6 talk about how rate cases should be
7 determined, including the schedule, including
8 the ordering and whatnot. It has nothing to
9 do with considering capping increases by the
10 utilities' request. So that is obviously not
11 an appropriate place to discuss this.

12 The whole point of the
13 inflation-constrained request is to address
14 affordability. There is no better place to
15 talk about that than an affordability OIR.
16 So we would clearly disagree with Mr. Roach's
17 suggestion.

18 Thank you.

19 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: Thank you.

20 I'm going to pause one more time and
21 see if there's any parties who have not yet
22 made a second comment who wish to. Just
23 raise your electronic hand.

24 (No response.)

25 ALJ WATTS-ZAGHA: All right. I'll
26 conclude here with a few final reminders.

27 Any procedural questions from
28 parties sent to me should ideally be sent via

1 email and with a copy to the entire service
2 list. I encourage parties to use acronyms
3 sparingly when we have these discussions and
4 also in comments.

5 I really appreciate the efficiency
6 with which you all addressed the issues of
7 scope and schedule today. Thank you for your
8 participation today.

9 We are off the record.

10 (Whereupon, at the hour of 4:24
11 p.m., this matter having concluded,
the Commission then adjourned.)

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BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CERTIFICATION OF TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDING

I, ANDREA L. ROSS, CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER
NO. 7896, IN AND FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DO
HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE PAGES OF THIS TRANSCRIPT
PREPARED BY ME COMPRISE A FULL, TRUE, AND CORRECT
TRANSCRIPT OF THE TESTIMONY AND PROCEEDINGS HELD IN
THIS MATTER ON OCTOBER 22, 2021.

I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT I HAVE NO INTEREST IN THE
EVENTS OF THE MATTER OR THE OUTCOME OF THE PROCEEDING.

EXECUTED THIS OCTOBER 26, 2021.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrea L. Ross". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "R" and a cursive "A".

ANDREA L. ROSS
CSR NO. 7896

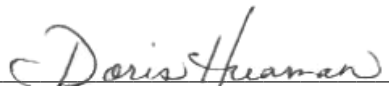
BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CERTIFICATION OF TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDING

I, DORIS HUAMAN, CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER
NO. 10538, IN AND FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DO
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EVENTS OF THE MATTER OR THE OUTCOME OF THE PROCEEDING.

EXECUTED THIS OCTOBER 26, 2021.


DORIS HUAMAN
CSR NO. 10538


BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CERTIFICATION OF TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDING

I, REBEKAH L. DE ROSA, CERTIFIED SHORTHAND
REPORTER NO. 8708, IN AND FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE PAGES OF THIS TRANSCRIPT
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THIS MATTER ON OCTOBER 22, 2021.

I FURTHER CERTIFY THAT I HAVE NO INTEREST IN THE
EVENTS OF THE MATTER OR THE OUTCOME OF THE PROCEEDING.

EXECUTED THIS OCTOBER 26, 2021.


REBEKAH L. DE ROSA
CSR NO. 8708

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